

Foreign Agricultural Service Turkey Regional NEWS

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U.S Crop Plantings Progress Rapidly

An early start to corn plantings in the U.S. this spring have resulted in plantings that are over 80% complete, compared to a five-year average of just 63 percent. Soybean, rice and cotton planting are also well ahead of the average planting progress for this time of the year. Early plantings can often result in higher-than-average yields, and recent rains have improved prospects in some areas. This is welcome news as commodity prices have reached very high levels this spring. Corn and wheat prices are about 20 percent higher than they were a year ago, and soybean prices have increased by nearly 70 percent.

U.S. Consular Section Notice Visa Services Will be Closed Between June 14 and June 30, 2004

For travelers planning to visit the United States this summer, please make your visa appointment immediately by following the procedures outlined at:

<http://www.usemb-ankara.org.tr>

Appointments are filling up quickly and travelers are advised to apply 6-8 weeks in advance of the desired travel date.

Recent commodity reports published by FAS Turkey include: Oilseeds Annual, Grain and Feed Update, Poultry and Products Update. Coming soon is the Cotton Annual, all available at:

<http://www.fas.usda.gov>

Look for a special feature on the 2004 regional cotton outlook in June!

BIOTECHNOLOGY HITS THE PRESS IN TURKEY. Articles appearing in Hurriyet and Milliyet on May 11, highlight the debate on agricultural biotechnology in Turkey. Our office remains committed to providing stakeholders with the objective information needed to make informed decisions on this issue. Please feel free to contact our office for any questions or information requests that you may have, or refer to our March Newsletter. In related news, on May 10, an Article in Ag Perspectives highlighted the fact that most feed manufactured in Europe is now labeled as containing GMOs. The threshold for GMO content is set at 0.9 percent, and it is difficult and costly for producers to certify below that level, and they are choosing not to.

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